

# THE Nexus

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State Librarian Ann Joslin

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## What's new with BTOP?

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) has identified several essential activities to expand under our Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant and we have approval from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to extend the project timeline to mid-December 2012. Activities during the last six months of the project include the following:

### Enhancing online resources

We continue to enhance [Scout Video Collections](#) through our partnership with Idaho Public Television (Idaho PTV). BTOP funds will support our [LearningExpress Library](#) subscription through October 2013.

### Digital literacy training and resources

**Our goals are to build library users' Internet and computer skills, help them use the available online resources, and educate them in the safe and ethical use of technology.** We are doing that by:

- expanding the Department of Labor's Idaho Youth Corps digital literacy coach program for summer 2012 to include both BTOP connectivity and non-connectivity libraries,
- working with the Idaho Office for Refugees to train several refugees to coach their peers one-on-one in digital literacy and computer use in over a dozen languages,
- adding to the digital literacy resources at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/digital-literacy>, and
- offering a [14 book digital literacy collection](#) to public library jurisdictions.

### Online media literacy modules

We are developing an online (and DVD) guide on using the Internet to connect with Idaho news and media. The goals are for learners to build Internet and computer skills; **use the Internet to be alert consumers of news and information; use "online @ your library" and [lili.org](http://lili.org) resources; and use free public access computing resources at the library.**

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### Idaho Commission for Libraries

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#### Mission:

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

#### Commissioners:

John Held, Dave Mecham,  
Bruce Noble, Sara Staub,  
and Larry Weeks

#### State Librarian

Ann Joslin

#### Commission Contacts:

- Danna Angevine, state publications, cataloging, and acquisitions librarian
- Dian Scott, office services supervisor
- Erica Compton, reading programs coordinator
- Frank Nelson, southeastern Idaho library consultant
- Gina Persichini, networking consultant
- Glynda Pflieger, school library consultant
- Jan Wall, northern Idaho library consultant
- Kevin Tomlinson, southwest/south central Idaho field consultant
- Marjorie Hooper, associate state librarian
- Pam Bradshaw, program supervisor
- Roger Dubois, administrative services manager
- Shirley Biladeau, continuing education consultant
- Sonja Hudson, grants/contracts officer
- Staci Shaw, reading programs coordinator
- Stephanie Bailey-White, reading programs coordinator
- Sue Walker, Talking Book Service consultant
- Teresa Lipus, public information specialist

*online @ your library, continued from page 1*

### Public information and promotion

We continue to develop and air BTOP TV and radio [public service announcements](#), in English and Spanish, through our partnership with IdahoPTV and Labor. We also use the Web, billboards, and social media, as well as distributing public information materials at conferences and workshops and making presentations to other State agencies and State and National legislators when the opportunities arise. The Commission will also cultivate **awareness of the “online @ your library” project among Idaho Press Club members and** establish collaborative relationships with newspapers and broadcasters to publicize public library online services and public access computing.

### Internal network upgrades, bandwidth support, and expanded Wi-Fi

Opportunities for BTOP connectivity libraries include expanding bandwidth for libraries with connectivity of less than four Mbps; continuing support for six months of bandwidth, July through December 2012 for the 55 libraries; adding more computers and pads; and internal network check-ups, including extending Wi-Fi.

Opportunities being offered to all public libraries include SonicWall firewall and filtering, Wi-Fi for any library that is willing to offer 24/7 beyond the walls, assistance for any public library that wishes to hook directly into Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON), **and assistance for any public library that wishes to run an “extension cord” from their** local high school to the public library for after-hours bandwidth supplement.

### Fostering college and career readiness

**A “College and Career Ready Summit: Moving Idaho Forward” is in the works for August 16–17, 2012** in Boise, to facilitate discussion and next-steps planning with libraries and other community partners to address the student dropout rate in Idaho and ensure that more students are [college and career ready](#). As Idaho educators look to online learning, digital literacy and computer/Internet access for students become even more critical.

### Moving forward

To date in the 55 connectivity libraries, broadband connectivity is sustained through local funding (25%) and federal E-Rate support (75%), 530 computers have been installed, Internet connectivity average is 11 Mbps, up from 1.5 Mbps, and there has been a 24% increase in the number of users of public access technology, as well as a three-fold increase in the number of visitors to the online resources offered at [lili.org](http://lili.org).

Moving forward, as we focus on digital literacy and sustainability, we continue to build on BTOP successes and support Idaho public libraries in their role as anchor institutions in their communities.

See more about the “online @ your library” project at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/online>.

The Nexus is available as an e-newsletter and PDF. To subscribe go to <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/subscribe-to-nexus>.



### *Scout Dialogue: Writers Collection* coming soon!

*Scout Dialogue: Writers Collection* is coming soon to Scout Video Collections. Join the Idaho Public Television crew as they interview authors, playwrights, and journalists about the craft of writing and examine individual works. Look for *Scout Dialogue: Writers Collection* videos on demand in July 2012 at <http://scout.lili.org/>.



### Registration now open for College and Career Ready Summit

Registration is now open for the College and Career Ready Summit: Moving Idaho Forward, August 16–17, 2012 in Boise. This summit will facilitate discussion and next-steps planning with other community partners to address the student dropout rate in Idaho and ensure that more students are college and career ready.

Each type of Idaho library plays various roles to support student learning and help students build 21st century skills of information, communication, and technology literacy. As Idaho educators look to online learning, digital literacy and computer/Internet access for students become even more critical.

The event is sponsored by the Idaho Commission for Libraries. See [libraries.idaho.gov/collegeandcareerready](http://libraries.idaho.gov/collegeandcareerready) for the agenda, a link to registration, and travel reimbursement information. At this time, attendance is limited to two per library or organization.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Stephanie Bailey-White at [Stephanie.Bailey-White@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Bailey-White@libraries.idaho.gov).

Hope to see you there!

### Library news from around the state

Ada Community Library, Victory branch recently welcomed Travis Porter as the new branch manager.

Benewah County District Library: Tensed Library and Tri-Community Library are the two most recent additions to the [Cooperative Information Network \(CIN\)](#) – a consortium of libraries sharing a common library card, circulation services, and a computer catalog. CIN also recently adopted a new checkout system with user-friendly features.

Garden City Library: In April, Idaho Power named the Garden City Public Library Foundation the winner of a \$1,500 Powering Tomorrow Grant. The money will help support the Bells for Books program that serves low-income and non-English-speaking patrons who can't get to the library easily. Bells for Books also serves as a traveling library for Head Start, the Learning Lab, and the Garden City Boys and Girls Club.

### Idaho Community Foundation Grants

Grangeville Centennial Library was granted \$1,000 to meet the needs of their elderly population and Lewiston City Library received \$2,300 to create Literacy Kits for the children's area.

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*Library News, continued from page 3*

Jefferson County District Library, Heart of the Valley Branch, Terreton: Elaine Davies retires at the end of June after serving the library and community for 33 years.

Larsen-Sant/Franklin County District Library in Preston saw their permanent override election pass with 75% support on May 15, 2012.

#### Libri Foundation Grants

Patricia Romanko Public Library in Parma and St. Maries Public Library were awarded grants from the Libri Foundation, a non-profit organization that donates new, quality, hardcover children's books to small, rural public libraries in the United States through its Books for Children program. For more information, see [www.librifoundation.org/](http://www.librifoundation.org/).



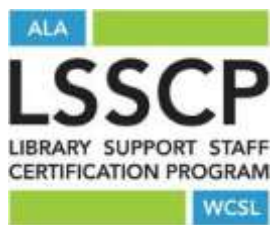
Mark Rose, Nampa Public Library Director; Shira Hotvedt, Community Relations Manager of Barnes & Noble; and Laura Abbott, Children's Services Librarian, Nampa Public Library

Nampa Public Library: Through a unique partnership between Nampa Public Library and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program at Southwest District Health, Every Child Ready to Read (ECRTR) Family Workshops were held every Friday for six weeks at the new WIC Clinic in the Nampa/Caldwell area. The family workshops involved young children and their parents learning about the six early literacy skills that help prepare children to be successful in school. A new Reading Corner was also dedicated in the waiting room of WIC. The workshops and **Southwest District Health's Reading Corner were made possible in part with support from the Idaho Commission for Libraries' Read to Me program and a book drive by Barnes & Noble Booksellers in Boise.** Read more in the [May 25 Scoop](#) newsletter.

Stanley Community Library had a groundbreaking ceremony for their new library building on Wednesday June 20. The expected move-in date is January 2013, with a grand opening celebration planned for July 2013. See photos and read more at [www.ruralnetwork.net/~stanlib/Whatsnew.html](http://www.ruralnetwork.net/~stanlib/Whatsnew.html).

University of Idaho Library: [The Map Room](#), UI Library's interactive map for historical image browsing, was selected for inclusion in the Internet Scout Report's "[Best of 2011-2012](#)" issue.

**Do you have news about your library you'd like to share? Please let me know at [teresa.lipus@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:teresa.lipus@libraries.idaho.gov).**



#### New Idaho Candidates for LSSC by Shirley Biladeau

Edie Lustig, Library Director, and Debbie Urquhart, Assistant Librarian, at Grangeville Centennial Public Library are the newest Idaho candidates working on their Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC). The LSSC Program is a national certification program that allows library support staff to demonstrate their competencies and be certified by the American Library Association. Candidates have four years to either take six classes to meet six different competencies or prepare individual portfolios to showcase experience that supports a specific competency. Currently, ten individuals throughout the state are working toward their certification.



## SPLAT turns 6! by Shirley Biladeau

Happy Birthday to the Special Projects Library Action Team (SPLAT)! This summer marks the sixth year that the Idaho Commission for Libraries-sponsored group has been working throughout the Idaho library community. This group, a result of the 2020 Futures Conference held in 2005, was charged to **serve in a crow's nest capacity to search for innovation, propose experiments, lead pilot projects, and discover new opportunities for the Idaho Commission for Libraries and the Idaho library community.**



Special Projects  
Library Action Team

As a result, during the past six years SPLAT members have provided change leadership and used **technology to enhance Idaho libraries' capacity to better serve their clientele. Outcomes include the following:**

- The SPLAT couch at Idaho Library Association meetings provides an opportunity for anyone to learn tips and tricks in using technology, share information with colleagues, and connect with others throughout Idaho.
- SPLAT 101 provides a blended-learning opportunity for the community to begin their journey in learning about new technology. Over 300 members of the Idaho library community originally participated in this effort, and SPLAT 101 remains available as an online resource at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/splat101>
- Members of SPLAT reached out beyond the borders of Idaho to gain additional insight by attending conferences such as Pegusas, Internet Librarian, Handheld Librarian, ALA, PLA, Computers in Libraries, Reference Renaissance, and others. They have returned to Idaho brimming with ideas and tools to share with their colleagues.

The Commission very much appreciates the contributions made by everyone who has been a member of the SPLAT team and would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude. This year also sees the entry of six new SPLAT members. It is with great excitement that I announce the 2012 SPLAT:

- Gena Marker from Centennial High School Library - Meridian School District
- George Williams from Latah County District Library
- Heidi Lewis from Boise Public Library!
- Jennifer Cromer from Lewis Clark State College
- Jennifer Hills from Twin Falls Public Library
- Jennifer Redford from Boise Public Library!
- Jezmyne Dene from Portneuf District Library
- Kate Baker from Meridian District Library - Silverstone Branch
- Nick Grove from Meridian District Library
- Nick Madsen from Community Library Network - Hayden Branch

This SPLAT team has already contributed their expertise by attending the regional Idaho Library Association Spring Conferences and providing on-site training for local libraries. Make it a point to get acquainted with these folks. They have a lot to share and would also love to learn from you so they can spread the word about new trends and technology. Be on the lookout for the SPLAT members at ILA conferences and subscribe to the SPLAT blog at <http://splat.lili.org> to keep up with what's new in libraryland, both in Idaho and beyond!





## SWIM Students to Graduate by Shirley Biladeau

This summer is the culmination of two years of long days and nights for twenty Masters of Library and Information Science (MLIS) students who participated in the University of North Texas SWIM Cohort. Two years ago these individuals from throughout Idaho began their journey toward achieving their goal of earning an MLIS.

In 2008, the Idaho Commission for Libraries partnered with state library agencies from Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota to submit a grant for library professional development to the Laura Bush Foundation. The SWIM (South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana) Regional Collaborative Library Education Project provided scholarships to educate 50 **librarians and school library media specialists to work in the region's rural communities.** Subsequently, over 70 individuals from these four states have received various levels of funding to support their education.

Idaho SWIM Cohort participants include:

- Beth Swenson, Twin Falls Public Library
- Bev McKay, Treasure Valley
- Bruce Godfrey, University of Idaho Library
- Colleen Bonnell, Payette Public Library
- Elizabeth Walker, Albertsons Library, Boise State University
- Erica Littlefield, Twin Falls Public Library
- Fiona May, Boise Public Library
- Gena Marker, Centennial High School Library, Meridian School District
- Holly Mortimer, Treasure Valley
- Jessica Tueller, Twin Falls Public Library
- Jill Mitchell, Meridian District Library
- Kate Baker, Meridian District Library
- Kathleen Lambert, Twin Falls Public Library
- **Kiersten Kerr, Coeur d'Alene School District**
- Kristi Brumley, College of Western Idaho Library
- Megan Egbert, Meridian Library District
- Rebekka Hanson, Madison District Library
- Sonja Humphries, Jerome High School Library
- Teresa Lucas, Latah County District Library
- Thomas Ivie, University of Idaho Law Library

A formal graduation ceremony will be held in Billings, Montana on August 18. Several students and their families will be making the journey to participate in the ceremony. Later this fall, smaller regional celebrations will bring closure to this achievement.

Congratulations to all students attending or graduating from MLIS programs this year! The Idaho library community continues to reap the benefits of all the continuing education efforts of individuals who work in Idaho libraries.



## Internet Use Policy and Internet Filtering

by Kevin Tomlinson

**The deadline is fast approaching. As we prepare to comply with Idaho's new law regarding Internet use in public libraries, here are a few tips to help you get up and running.**



What is the deadline? That depends.

- Beginning October 1, 2012:

All public libraries in Idaho receiving public money and governed by the provisions of Chapter 26 (city libraries) or Chapter 27 (district libraries) of Title 33, Idaho Code, will need to comply with Idaho Code 33- 2741 regarding Internet access policies.

- By July 1, 2012:

All public libraries receiving E-Rate funding for Internet must comply with CIPA requirements for Internet safety.

*In addition to complying with Idaho Code 33-2741, public libraries receiving E-Rate funding must comply with CIPA requirements.*

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) has assembled a compliance checklist to help public libraries ensure they have completed the relevant steps toward compliance. This checklist will help you understand the difference between the two sets of requirements and how to comply with one or both of them. To download a copy of the checklist, visit <http://libraries.idaho.gov/files/FilteringLawChecklist20120213.doc>.

How do we know what our policy should include?

ICfL made two templates available for libraries that do not already have an Internet access policy in place. One template is for public libraries that receive E-Rate funds; the other is for **all other public libraries. The templates are on ICfL's Internet Use in Public Libraries - Policy & Procedure Resources** page at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/InternetUsePolicies>. To use the templates, simply fill in the blanks.

Once our new policy goes into effect, do we need to do anything else?

**The new law requires that the library's board of trustees review the policy at least once every three years. Best practice is to review your library's policies annually, in order to keep them timely and relevant. The board's annual meeting when many libraries review, amend, repeal, or adopt bylaws, policies, and procedures. However, reviewing your library's policies on a rotating basis can make this task easier. By reviewing one or two policies each month, instead of all at once, the board can create a cycle of monthly housekeeping, as opposed to a yearly chore.**

What kind of language should we add about unacceptable behavior and consequences?

**One way for the library's trustees to make this task easier is to add any language pertaining to behavior, penalties, and consequences to your Acceptable Behavior Policy. By using ICfL's Internet access policy templates "as is" and not adding any additional language, you can streamline the process of complying with I.C. 33-2741.**



Every library should have an Acceptable Behavior Policy, so this is an opportunity to create one or to revise your existing Policy.

Having an Acceptable Behavior Policy enables the public library to maintain a safe and healthy environment in which library users and staff are free from harassment, intimidation, and threats to **their safety and wellbeing. In order to protect all library users' right of access to library facilities; to ensure the safety of users and staff; and to protect library resources and facilities from damage; the library's board of trustees may impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place, or manner of library access. Including language that covers acceptable behavior when using the library's public access computers and when accessing the Internet is an appropriate addition to your library's Acceptable Behavior Policy.**

**For more information on the American Library Association's Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage, see [www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=otherpolicies&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13147](http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=otherpolicies&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13147).**

#### Internet Filtering

In addition to having an Internet access policy in place, Idaho Code 33-2741 requires that technology protection measures (filters) be in place by October 1, 2012, to protect against visual depictions that are child pornography, obscenity, or harmful to minors. See I.C. 33-2741(7) for a definition of terms. The filters *must* be in place on computer workstations provided by the library and used by minors. Computers used by adults, but not by minors, *may* be filtered, but it is not required. Libraries should **take care to use filters in accordance with the library's mission.**

Visit <http://libraries.idaho.gov/InternetUsePolicies> for more information about policies, Internet safety, and filters.

#### My First Books libraries by Stephanie Bailey-White

A record-breaking forty-seven public and school libraries applied to participate in My First Books for next year, requesting services for almost 4,500 children from birth to kindergarten. Read to Me has funding to serve a little more than 3,000 children in the coming year so the review process was very competitive. **"The number of applications demonstrates how critical the need is to get books in the hands of children who are unlikely to have many books at home and are less-likely to visit their public library,"** said Read to Me Project Coordinator Staci Shaw.



**Over half of Idaho's children qualify for federally-assisted nutrition programs, and many of these children have no access to age-appropriate books. "We wish we had the funding to serve all the children requested on the applications, but we know that our libraries will make a lasting impact on the lives of the children we are able to serve with this program,"** Shaw said.

My First Books (formerly Read to Me First Book) provides a book each month to participating children, along with a parent newsletter aimed at early literacy awareness and activities that help children get ready to read. Participating libraries partner with preschools, daycares, and/or elementary schools for the school year. Librarians visit the partner site(s) each month to conduct a storytime, model early

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literacy skills, and distribute the Book of the Month and parent newsletter, *The Bookworm*. Librarians also conduct one parent workshop or family literacy event during the year for parents of participating children in order to increase awareness of early literacy skills and resources offered by the library. Parents are encouraged to sign up for a library card.

The Read to Me program has sponsored this program since 1997 and received state funding along with Library Services and Technology Act funds to reach more children starting in 2008. Each year the number of children served has steadily grown. The program has been thoroughly evaluated by Boise State University Literacy Professor Dr. Roger Stewart. The data shows that My First Books parents read more to their children and actively engage their children in other early literacy activities as a result of participating in the program.

When the number of applications exceeds the amount of funding available, priority is given to public libraries that have participated three years or less. The 36 libraries who will be participating in the 2012-2013 program are:

- Aberdeen District Library
- Armorial Tuttle Public Library, New Plymouth
- Bellevue Public Library
- Blackfoot Public Library
- Boise Public, Main
- Cambridge Public Library
- Cascade Public Library
- \*Clearwater Memorial Public Library, Orofino
- Coeur d'Alene Public Library
- \*Community Library Network, Post Falls
- Community Library Network, Rathdrum
- Community Library Network, Spirit Lake
- DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert
- East Bonner County District Library, Clark Fork
- East Bonner County District Library, Sandpoint
- Garden City Library
- Gooding Public Library
- \*Grangeville Centennial Library
- Idaho Falls Public Library
- Jefferson Co. District, Menan-Annis
- Kuna District Library
- Lizard Butte Library, Marsing
- Marshall Public Library
- McCall Public Library
- Meridian Library District, Main
- North Bingham County District Library, Shelley
- Payette Public Library
- Portneuf District Library, Chubbuck
- \*Ririe City Library
- Shoshone Public Library
- Snake River Community School, Blackfoot
- South Bannock District Library, Lava
- \*South Bannock District Library, McCammon
- St. Maries Public Library
- \*Twin Falls Public Library
- West Bonner Library District, Priest River

*\*First-Time Participants*

## Volunteer Appreciation at ICfL

From January through December 2011, 119 individuals gave 10,000 hours of their time at the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL)! This year we recognized their dedication and commitment during Volunteer Appreciation Week, April 15-21, with a tour of the State Historical Society, goodies supplied by staff throughout the week at the "Volunteer Café," a photo poster, and a photo slide show. In June we also had "Volunteer Lunch on the Lawn" and were treated with



State Librarian Ann Joslin thanks volunteers for 10,000 hours of service in 2011



ICfL Volunteer Coordinator Sheila Winther thanks Ruby Weaver for 2,000 hours and Fred Riddle for 20 years of service

perfect weather for celebrating the 2011 volunteers and their many accomplishments, including the following:

- 70 recording production volunteers: 4,800 hours
- 33 Support volunteers: 3,200 hours
- 16 Telephone Pioneers: 1,200 hours
- 5 groups from schools, counties, and organizations: 800 hours

## Teens and Technology Week 2012 by Sue Walker

More than 1,600 teens statewide celebrated Teens and Technology Week in March. Forty-four public or school libraries used the YALSA theme “Geek Out @ Your Library” or a theme of their own to demonstrate to teens that libraries are more than just books. Programs included making posters with teens and community partners, opening a teen zone in the library, creating book trailers, hosting a Wii tournament, and exploring “retro” technology that teens might not be aware of (you used that before computers?!) Fourteen participating libraries hosted Teens and Technology events for the first time, and most participants indicated they would do so again. All participating libraries received promotional materials from ICfL, and many collaborated with other libraries or community organizations to promote activities. A complete summary of activities is available [here](#).



Projects by Bear Lake County District Library teens

Watch LibIdaho for details about Teen Read Week in October, or contact [Erica Compton](#) or [Sue Walker](#) at ICfL with ideas on how to use the theme “It Came From the Library” to involve teens.

## I wish I could sit and read all day, but I have a column to write by Kevin Tomlinson

Public library directors in Idaho are known for their resourcefulness. One of the tools they often make use of is the local or area newspaper. Writing a weekly or monthly newspaper column is an effective — and cost-effective — way of reaching your community and shaping its view of the public library. Reaching out to the community on a regular basis is important for several reasons. This means of communication can advertise library programs, announce new library hours, and introduce new staff, of course. In addition, it offers the added bonus of reaching those who do not frequent libraries. **These people are taxpayers, too, and they need to know that the library’s staff does many things which do not involve sitting at the desk.**

**As anyone who has done the job can attest, the library director’s duties are multifaceted. One of the many responsibilities of this position is to publicize and interpret the library to the community. Many issues come to the attention of the director, and by extension to the attention of the staff and trustees. Staff and trustees learn about the library over time, and many of the myths and misinformation about libraries are dispelled for them.**

But what about the public? Do they really know what goes on behind the scenes at the library? Probably not. They may think, as many people seem to, that the state operates and funds public libraries, or that publishers automatically send one copy of each book to public libraries, or that libraries operate strictly with donated materials and volunteer labor, or even that elves come in at night to do what little work needs to be done, because after all, it’s just a library. The director probably just sits and reads all day, anyway. The truth is that most people do not really give much





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thought to how a library operates. They just know that they want the latest Grisham or Steele or Karon, and that the library always comes through.

**The newspaper column is the director's way of telling the community, all of the community, more about the library. And there is a lot going on at the library. While it is tempting to use the column to review books, it is much more important to use this forum to explain the library's role in the community and to raise awareness of issues facing the library. Do you have a local history or genealogy collection? Do you have new computers? Is it time to publicize Summer Reading? Is there a new book discussion group that your public might like to know about? There may be potential library users out there who would like to know. Are you facing budget cuts? Is there a censorship issue that needs to be discussed? The newspaper column is the place to discuss these issues. If the library wants community support, the community needs to be informed. And, they need to hear the correct facts, from the library director, not just the version that is going around town.**

Other topics worth writing about include:

1. Services offered by the library, such as interlibrary loans and homework help. What are they? How do they work? Each of these is worthy of coverage in the newspaper, written in a way that someone who does not use the library can understand.
2. **How can a child get his or her very first library card? This is the director's opportunity to explain the lifelong benefits of introducing a child to the library and to reading at an early age. This column can even include a story about an excited child bringing books up to the desk or how a youngster told staff about a favorite bedtime story that mom or dad reads aloud. You can change the names to protect the innocent.**
3. **A director who is lucky enough to have a friends group to help out can write a big "thank you" for a special project or gift purchase for the library. This is a chance to name names and be as generous with the friends group as they have been with the library. It's also a perfect way to tell how others can join the friends group. Nothing appeals like a success story.**
4. **Many library users do not know anything about the library's history. Here is a perfect place to recount who donated the land for the town's first library, who funded it, who staffed it. It's also an opportunity to compare and contrast how the library is funded and staffed now and how many services have been added over time. Don't forget historical statistics if you have them.**
5. Publicizing an upcoming library event is definitely an appropriate topic for the column. In addition to the usual who, what, when, and where, this is a good place for details of how the program was planned and whether or not it is part of a series. If there is enough space, it is a good idea to add what additional programs the library would like to offer and even to make an appeal for volunteers to make these programs work.
6. When writing about volunteer opportunities at the library, it is important to list what skills are needed, how they could benefit the library, and the name and contact number of the staff member who coordinates volunteers. It is also a good idea to highlight how much money the library is saving by utilizing volunteers when possible.
7. Fines and fees can create bad feelings toward the library and drive library users away. The library director could explain about how it hurts the library — and, by extension, the community — when materials do not come back to the library. Not only are these materials unavailable to

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others who might want them, but also the replacement cost may not be in the library's budget. **This would be a good time to explain ways of working off fines, paying the library in installments, or maybe talking about the upcoming amnesty day that the library will be holding soon. This would be a great time to announce the library's Food for Fines program, if there is one in the works.**

8. Another way of using the column is to write about something that may cause an emotional response in the community. For instance, the library has managed to secure a larger building and plans on moving into the new space as soon as renovations are completed. The library has been in the old building for as long as most people can remember, and there is going to be a public outcry over the move. The column is one way the director can explain the reasons for the move (unstable roof, ancient furnace, no parking, for example) and the many benefits of the new space. This is a chance to thank those who made the new building possible and to say farewell to the old familiar building that the community will now mourn. And it will help the staff have the words to respond to the public displeasure with the move.
9. Donors need to be thanked. A newspaper column is a fine place for publishing thank yous, even anonymous ones. The thank you may include how the item will be used and what segment(s) of **the library's users will benefit from the gift. If no gifts are forthcoming, the column could even** be a place to publicize a donation to a neighboring community, which might trigger some local generosity. Thanking a deceased patron and his or her family for a bequest to the library is a subtle but appropriate way of letting the community know that this is an option to consider as well.
10. The library is a great deal. For a small amount of money paid in taxes or guest card fees, library patrons can check out thousands of dollars worth of materials. This is one of the last real bargains. The director should consider publishing some numbers to help the reader understand how much money a typical user or family could save by using the public library instead of buying books and movies.

The important thing is to vary the topic each week or month, so that there is always something for the reader to look forward to. Although it is tempting to publish book reviews each time a column is due, the wise director will resist the temptation to waste this type of opportunity.

A little careful planning can help the director to decide what topics to emphasize or announce in the next issue. Checking facts for accuracy, using statistics when necessary, and keeping the tone upbeat and never personal will allow the director to explain the library and its programs to the public, reach the non-library user, build public support for the library, and provide the trustees with talking points when they are doing their bit as library advocates — and at no cost to the library.

